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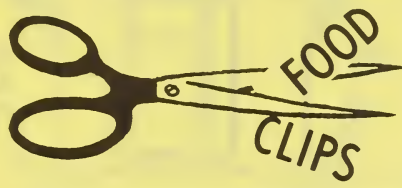
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Food and Home Notes

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Freeze only high-quality, fresh food ingredients. Underripe fruits and vegetables lack flavor and overripe vegetables are flat and tough or soft and mushy after freezing.

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Cooked dry beans freeze especially well. Because freezing softens beans somewhat, cook them until barely tender for the best quality frozen product.

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Freezing gelatin mixtures? Be sure it's made stiffer than usual to lessen the chance of separating.

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Remember to cool food quickly if preparing for the freezer. Pack food tightly to avoid air pockets and then put into small pans lined with heat-resistant freezer wrap -- which will allow the food to cool down and stop cooking.

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PROPERTY VALUE AND TREES

Selling your home? You may find that the difference in the selling price between your house and the one across the street may be the trees. For trees substantially enhance the residential property values, according to a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture study.

According to the survey conducted by the environmental researchers of the Forest Service, trees can increase the property value of your home from five to ten percent -- in some cases even twenty percent. Well-placed trees often add to the beauty of the property, thereby increasing the appeal of the home and property. There are also several side-effects of the value of owning a home which is "framed" by trees because they also provide shade and act as a natural habitat for birds. A "tree lined" street or a "large, old oak" lends itself to comments that offer the seller points of enrichment to home-ownership.

FOOD PRESERVATION SERIES VII

The "How-To"* -- and Basic Steps
for Successful Home Freezing

One-two-three steps to remember:

1. Use only quality fresh products.
(Freezing retains but does not improve quality.)
2. Work (prepare food) under sanitary conditions.
3. Use only approved packaging materials. Check these before you start. Instructions must be followed closely.



Blanch or scald all vegetables, except possibly green peppers.

This is a most important step as the heating of vegetables slows or stops the action of enzymes. Up until the time vegetables are picked, enzymes help them grow and mature. After picking they cause loss of flavor and color. If vegetables are not heated long enough, the enzymes continue to be active even during the frozen storage period. The result is off-flavor, discoloration, or toughening. (Corn on the cob is a common example.) Heating also wilts, or softens, vegetables and makes them easier to pack, requiring less packaging space.

* H&G 10 - USDA's "Home Freezing of Fruits and Vegetables", 50¢.

Available from Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20250.

—Freezing (Part II)

And - remember to -

1. Use anti-darkening agents such as ascorbic acid for certain fruits to prevent discoloration.
2. Use either dry sugar or syrup pack for fruits or puree or plain dry pack as for berries.
3. Keep meats cold while preparing for freezing.
4. Clean knives and cutting boards carefully to avoid contamination of other foods later.
5. Freeze only fresh, high quality poultry. Do not stuff birds before freezing because the time consumed during freezing, thawing, and reheating may be long enough to permit growth of food-spoilage and food poisoning bacteria. Therefore, freeze only unstuffed whole poultry or individual pieces.

And - finally to -

- (a) Package to remove all air; fasten airtight.
- (b) Label with date and name of product. Keep an inventory list.
- (c) Promptly place packages in food freezer in the coldest section.
- (d) Maintain zero degree temperature in freezer.
- (e) Use all products within recommended storage period.
- (f) Frequently check freezer cords, plug-in, and temperature recording for good operating conditions.

Freezing as a way of preserving food means subjecting each sealed-from-the-air-container of food to the sharpest cold we can -- ideally below zero. The colder the temperature, the longer the time the food will hold satisfactorily. Remember--freezing does not kill the organisms that cause spoilage, as canning does; it merely stops their growth temporarily.

COMPARED TO WHAT? Protein: Meat and Meat Alternates

COST OF 20 GRAMS OF PROTEIN FROM VARIOUS SOURCES: JAN. 1974 and AUG. 1973

RATING (Jan.74)	FOOD	MKT UNIT	PRICE PER		PART OF MKT UNIT TO GIVE 20 GRAMS OF PROTEIN PERCENT	COST OF 20 GRAMS OF PROTEIN	
			MKT UNIT CENTS	CENTS		CENTS	CENTS
			Jan.	Aug.		Jan.	Aug.
1	PEANUT BUTTER (2)*	12 OZ	56	52	23	13	12
2	DRY BEANS (1)	LB	57	29	24	14	07
3	BEAN SOUP, CANNED (4)	11.5 OZ	20	18	96	19	17
4	CHICKEN, WHOLE, READY-TO-COOK (14)	LB	59	92	37	22	33
5	MILK, WHOLE FLUID (5)	HALF GAL	76	65	29	22	19
6	EGGS, LARGE (10)	DOZEN	93	97	25	24	25
7	TUNA, CANNED (7)	6.5 OZ	54	50	44	24	22
8	SARDINES, CANNED (6)	4 OZ	26	23	94	24	22
9	HAMBURGER (11)	LB	102	104	24	25	25
10	BEEF LIVER (9)	LB	103	98	24	25	24
11	CHICKEN BREASTS (17)	LB	101	140	25	26	37
12	AMERICAN PROCESS CHEESE (8)	8 OZ	71	60	38	27	23
13	PORK, PICNIC (13)	LB	89	92	32	29	33
14	TURKEY, READY-TO-COOK (12)	LB	84	80	35	30	28
15	HAM, WHOLE (15)	LB	124	122	29	36	35
16	ROUND BEEFSTEAK (19)	LB	177	188	22	39	41
17	OCEAN PERCH, FILLET, FROZEN (16)	LB	112	101	36	40	37
18	PORK LOIN ROAST (26)	LB	123	152	33	41	51
19	RUMP ROAST OF BEEF, BONED (22)	LB	173	182	26	44	47
20	LIVERWURST (21)	8 OZ	75	73	60	45	43
21	FRANKFURTERS (23)	LB	125	129	36	45	47
22	HAM, CANNED (20)	LB	189	171	24	45	41
23	SALAMI (24)	8 OZ	95	93	50	48	47
24	SIRLOIN BEEFSTEAK (28)	LB	173	187	28	49	53
25	CHUCK ROAST OF BEEF, BONE IN (18)	LB	139	114	35	49	40
26	RIB ROAST OF BEEF (27)	LB	156	160	33	51	53
27	HADDOCK, FILLET, FROZEN (25)	LB	148	136	35	52	48
28	PORK CHOPS, CENTER CUT (30)	LB	163	196	35	57	68
29	BOLOGNA (29)	8 OZ	82	81	73	59	59
30	PORK SAUSAGE (32)	LB	127	137	52	66	71
31	PORTERHOUSE BEEFSTEAK (33)	LB	203	217	34	68	73
32	VEAL CUTLETS (31)	LB	330	325	21	71	69
33	LAMB CHOPS, LOIN (34)	LB	232	241	31	71	74
34	BACON, SLICED (35)	LB	139	161	52	73	85

* Number in parentheses: rating for August 1973.

USDA RESEARCH

--- on Keeping Meat

U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists have found a way of keeping meat fresh longer in the supermarket display case without affecting its safety or wholesomeness.

It consists of a packet of powder -- a mixture of a nonvolatile acid (such as citric acid) and the salt of a volatile acid (such as sodium bicarbonate) which is inserted inside packages of fresh meat. As moisture builds up within the package, the acid and salt react to give off carbon dioxide. This protective gas fills the void spaces within the package controlling most of the micro-organisms responsible for meat spoilage.

NOTE:

Additional information for the MEDIA and photographs (when applicable) may be obtained from: Shirley Wagener, Editor of Food and Home Notes, Room 535 A, Office of Communication/Press Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Or telephone 202-447-5898.